Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the first paragraph of page 2 of the above-identified application with the following paragraph:

a1

A variety of fluorescent indicators that are useful for the detection of biologically relevant soluble free metal ions (such as Ca^{2+}, Mg^{2+} and Zn^{2+}) have been described that utilize oxygen-containing anionic or polyanionic chelators to bind to metal ions. In particular, fluorescent indicators utilizing a polycarboxylate BAPTA chelator have been previously described (U.S. Patent No.: 4,603,209 to Tsien et al. (1986); U.S. Patent No. 5,049,673 to Tsien et al. (1991); U.S. Patent No. 4,849,362 to DeMarinis et al. (1989); U.S. Patent No. 5,453,517 to Kuhn et al. (1995); U.S. Patent No. 5,501,980 to Katerinopoulos et al. (1996); U.S. Patent No. 5,459,276 to Kuhn et al. (1995) (all incorporated by reference). Some fluorescent indicators selective for Li^+, Na^+ and K^+ in aqueous or organic solution have also been described, based on the chemical modification of crown ethers (U.S. Patent No. 5,134,232 to Tsien et al. (1992); U.S. Patent No. 5,405,975 to Kuhn et al. (1995); both incorporated by reference.

As required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, applicants have provided a separate, marked-up version of the amended specification, showing the changes relative to the previous version of the application (attached).